

Prairie Fire

an independent
community newsweekly

.15

VOL. 1, NO. 11

REGINA, SASK

JANUARY 13 - JANUARY 19, 1970

BILL TWO-PHEW!

by ROBBIE MAHOOD
and MAIJA CRANE

Saskatchewan's crisis in health services continues unabated.

At issue is provincial responsibility for the provision of hospital services, the right of hospital workers to improve their meagre standard of living and ultimately the quality of medical care enjoyed by citizens of Saskatchewan.

On Dec. 11, the Thatcher cabinet invoked the Essential Services Act (Bill 2) to force 180 striking hospital workers back to work at Victoria Union Hospital in Prince Albert. The Act provides for compulsory arbitration and fines and imprisonment for workers who refuse to return to their jobs.

On Dec. 15, W.G. Gilbey, President of the Sask. Fed. of Labour, requested the arbitration board chairman be appointed by Chief Justice E.M. Culliton, rather than a judge selected by the cabinet.

Premier Thatcher, in rejecting the proposal, stated he had "great confidence in the impartiality of judges." Undoubtedly, the Premier's "confidence" was inspired by the first instance of the use of Bill 2 in 1966.

At that time, members of OCAW Union, on strike against the Sask. Power Corp., were holding out for a 8 % wage increase. The government would only offer 6%.

A compulsory arbitration board chaired by cabinet-man District Court Judge A.M. Kindred of Yorkton, eventually "awarded" a 5.5% increase, less than the original government offer.

Prince Albert Hospital workers returned to work on Dec. 12, rather than risk heavy fines and imprisonment.

The Union appointed Father Philip J. Loehr, well-known author of The Exploitation of the Western Farmer, as their representative in the arbitration board proceedings.

The opening up of Bill 2 proceedings in Prince Albert now gives the Thatcher government a free hand in dictating wages of hospital workers throughout the prov-

ince.

This fact was amply demonstrated in the case of Lloydminster hospital workers. Union and hospital negotiators there reached agreement on a 7% wage increase on Dec. 13. A week later, the offer was withdrawn by the hospital board. In response to protests from CUPE, E. R. Bexson, the hospital administrator, stated since Bill 2 had been invoked in Prince Albert, it would have to serve as a "trend-setter" for wage settlements across the province.

In Estevan, the strike continues.

A few employees have gone back to work, their morale broken by more than two months of picketing, the invocation of Bill 2 in Prince Albert, and a complete impasse in negotiations.

Nevertheless, over 80 members of the Estevan CUPE local remain firm in their determination to win a meaningful wage settlement.

The government's decision to drop collective bargaining in favor of Bill 2 and refusal by the Estevan hospital board to negotiate will force a stronger response from the union.

Hitherto picketing at St. Joseph's Hospital in Estevan has been for publicity purposes only. The union is now urging a boycott of the hospital by citizens sympathetic to the strike demands, a CUPE spokesman said Saturday.

Over the past few years the Liberal Government has attempted to shift the burden of hospital costs to local taxpayers, and through deterrent fees, to consumers of medical care.

Hospital operating expenses are now paid only partially by the Saskatchewan Hospital Service Plan. The rest must be raised from increased local taxes, despite the fact that payments made by the provincial government are reimbursed 50%

by federal grants.

Now hospital workers must subsidize the government as well as accepting starvation wages.

Relying on the old maxim "divide and rule", the government is attempting to pit farmers and taxpayers against the hospital worker. The government can succeed in evading its responsibility if it can convince taxpayers farmers that wage demands are responsible for inflation. In fact, the largest single factor in rising hospital costs is an increase in medical and drug expenses.

Nothing could make the Liberal Government, the owners of oil and potash companies, the drug monopolies, and the giant food processing corporations happier than to see over-taxed farmers and under-paid workers fighting over who bears responsibility for deteriorating health services in this province.

U of S "HOSTS" FARMERS

This year, the University of Saskatchewan is host to "Farm and Home Week." This is a series of speakers and seminars, running from January 12-16, on "Marketing our Resources".

A long and impressive list of speakers, academics and government representatives, will address those select farmers who aren't too disillusioned with the advice of agricultural experts to listen.

But is Farm and Home Week or the university which hosts it, really likely to provide solutions to the problems which working farmers face in this province?

The agricultural community is being seriously threatened by the most basic law of capitalism--that fewer and fewer companies control all the major areas of the economy.

This is monopolization. It is as much a force in agriculture as it is in industry.

It is reflected in the growing trend toward corporate farming. It appears in the general destruction

of rural culture.

Finally, there are monopolies in all those industries that sell the farmer his equipment, seed, etc., and that process and market his product. Transactions in both cases give high profits to the corporations and cost the farmer dearly.

Most of the political history of Saskatchewan is the history of the farmers' struggles against exploitation by these corporations. Today, these oppressors are joined by companies which compete with him in production. These are agri-businesses, large company farms.

The total result for the farmer is the "cost-price" squeeze. It threatens both individual farmers and non-corporate farming as a whole.

Yet Farm and Home Week is unlikely to pay much attention either to the antagonism between agri-businesses and working farmers or to the conflict of interests between them.

In 1931 there were 136,500 farmers in Saskat-

chewan; by 1951 there were 112,000. By 1966 this figure was down to 85,700.

Capitalist economic dictate that 50 per cent of the nation's farming community will be eliminated by 1980. (Farmers who leave their land have no alternative but to join the unskilled labour force.)

The current cost-price crisis in agriculture is intensified by the marketing crisis which presently faces grain farmers.

Farm experts and politicians alike have offered little in the way of solutions to this problem. Speculation has turned on the themes of "diversification", more "business-like" farm management, and the more rigorous pursuit of sales on the international market.

While diversification may well be called for, at best it is a partial solution for a few farmers.

Its real benefits will go to the farm equipment manu-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

Editorial:

BILL TWO

Bill 2, the Essential Services Act, is legislation which forces striking workers to halt their strike under threat of penalties of \$1,000 a day or imprisonment.

Under the guise of acting in the Public Interest, the government has put an end to the strike of 180 hospital workers in Prince Albert. The workers were striking to raise their poverty-level wages, which in some cases were less than what they would get if they quit work and went on welfare.

The use of Bill 2 in the hospital strike covers up the inability of the government to maintain good health and hospital services. This is because the government finds it difficult to serve both the needs of the people and the needs of big business.

The Saskatchewan government serves foreign capital through such schemes as tax exemptions and low taxes for corporations. Because of this, it is unable to provide proper public services--education, housing, welfare, as well as health.

It is forced to close rural hospitals, which jeopardize the safety of farmers and small town folk. It is forced to pay public service workers low wages. For hospital workers this means wages lower than the poverty level.

Bill 2 was brought into being specifically for the purpose of controlling strikes in the publicly owned sector of the economy. The first use of Bill 2 was against the strike by Saskatchewan Power workers.

In this strike, the union received a lower wage increase, under arbitration (5.5%) than they had originally been promised by the government (6%).

As the economic situation deteriorates, similar treatment is in store for all workers. Soon more occupations will come under essential services acts and other anti-labour legislation. More strikes will be prohibited and more anti-union legislation will be handed down by compulsory arbitration. The workers will lose the right to strike.

mands?

Under these circumstances, freedom becomes the freedom of governments and business to exploit labour. It deprives people of the right not to be exploited.

Government oppression must be halted by militant actions of the people. United we can force the repeal of anti-labour laws.

POWER TO THE WORKERS :

"LAW and ORDER"

The call for law and order is being raised in Regina by groups like the "Responsible Citizens' Committee" and Police Chief Cookson.

These people are literally up in arms about "hoodlums"--especially young ones. They say absurd things like, "75 per cent of thefts and robberies in Regina recently have been done by young people who need money for drugs."

If this stand weren't so sinister in its intent it would be absurdly funny.

The people behind the new law and order drive ought to know well enough what really makes people steal. They ought to understand, because basically they're the culprits.

The RCC has been openly identified as a wing of the Regina Employers' Association. The REA is an agency of Regina businessmen, most of them big.

Ultimately they are impotent politically and economically. They're dominated by bigger men in the East and the U.S. But around here they feel like pretty big fish.

The REA is an agency of men who have some powers to fix prices and keep them high, to keep wages low, and to give orders to the police.

These are the men in Regina most responsible for theft and robbery. They own businesses, which gives them power over others. They use this power to seize from working people what they have produced.

They call their spoils profit. They call their power private property.

The only crime in Regina that these men are seriously upset about is crime against property. All the big men behind the RCC and the REA have been robbed or might be robbed.

Thus the demand for law and order. Thus no demand for stopping the real criminals.

The attack on young people, however, is even more sinister. Its goal is to smash a threat to businesses more potent than mere theft and robbery.

This is the threat of people understanding what the real issues are, and then getting together to change the rules of the game.

The economy and the police must belong to the people!



Law and Order in North America

Prairie Fire

The PRAIRIE FIRE is published weekly on Tuesdays by the Regina Community Media Project, a non-profit organization. Offices at Room 210, Northern Crown Building, 1821 Scarth Street, Regina, Saskatchewan. Phone 523-1076. Saskatoon bureau is at 108 3rd Avenue South.

STAFF THIS WEEK

Norm Bolen	Ray Davie
Jeff Goodman	Barb Cameron
Trish Anweiler	Barry Lipton
Mike Lloyd	Dan Ferguson
Barb Smith	Bill Graham
Richard Thompson	Brian Gladwell
Howard Brown	Liz Kalmakoff
Paul Hanley	Karen Perrin
Pat Hall	Al Page
Pat Schuett	Miles Clarke
Gisele Toupin	Lorraine Moulding
Robbie Mahood	Erna Schick
Shirley Spidla	Zenon Topuschak
Ted Turner	Terry Zimmer



SASK. ECONOMY IN TROUBLE

(The following is an analysis of the Provincial Treasurer's White Paper on the condition of Saskatchewan's economy during 1969.)

By RAY DAVIE

Saskatchewan's economy is in trouble.

Even though much of the provincial treasurer's report seems confident in the province's economic future, a true representation of our position gives us cause to worry. And the situation isn't going to improve in the near future.

The first problem is that of personal income. The paper estimates that total personal income in 1969 will have been \$2,465 million, an increase of 7.6 per cent over 1968. This represents \$2,570 per person in 1969.

But the report states that these figures assume there will have been a 10.5 per cent increase in farming income.

In fact, it is impossible for this assumption to be borne out. An accurate figure for personal income would be much lower, because farm sales were nowhere near this level last year.

Farmers' spending is the major source of income for other people in the province. When farmers are hurting, the whole economy suffers.

The report also predicts that labour income should rise to a record level of \$1,233 million, a 5 per cent increase over 1968. But the report fails to mention all the tax and price increases that the province has suffered over the last year.

Workers will get more dollars, but each one will be worth less.

A true picture of our income position, therefore, is that farm income is down, provincial sales are down, merchants have increased prices to attempt to compensate for their losses, and labour's income isn't enough to meet rising expenses.

The provincial government has responded to the situation by raising taxes. The White paper gives every indication that taxes will again increase in 1970.

Last year, tax and price increases were as follows:

----The gasoline tax rose from 15 to 17 cents per gallon.

----The education and health tax rose from 4 per cent to 5 per cent.

----The liquor tax was increased.

----Deterrent fees were retained.

----The Consumer's Price Index went up 3.3 percent

from Sept. 1968-Sept. 1969.

----Housing completions were down by almost 1000 from 1968 because of continuing high interest rates.

----Bank interest rates rose by over 2 per cent.

These increases, plus the fact that farm cash receipts are down 17% from last year and realized farm net income is down by more than 30%, have placed a heavy burden on consumers and taxpayers.

Steuart's report, however, promises nothing but more tax increases. Nor did last year's tax increases bring the results that Thatcher government wanted. In every case increased revenues from raised taxes were less than the original estimates.

The government did not get the revenues it had hoped for from taxation. Since it is unwilling or unable to really change the economic situation any other way, it will have to increase taxes this year to compensate.

In short, the wage earner and taxpayer has had two bad years and can expect no improvement in 1970.

The province's corporations, on the other hand, will probably do pretty well. So far, they have weathered the economic crisis fairly well, as the report demonstrates. The value of its sales are as follows:

Net Value of Commodity Production	\$1,600
Value of Mineral Production	347
Value of Oil production	196
Value of Manufactured Goods	505
Estimated Retail Trade	1,056
Farm Implement Sales	85
Total	\$3,789

What is vitally important however, is how little of this income the corporations in Saskatchewan paid to the Provincial Government in taxes.

The white paper claims that total government tax revenues in 1969 were \$344.6 million. But revenue from corporate income tax, oil and gas revenues, and from industrial licensing permits all the ways corporations are taxed, amounted to only \$86.6 million.

Total government revenues for 1969 contained only a 25 percent contribution from industry. Seventy-five per cent came from taxes paid by wage earners.

This represents a reduction in industry's contribution of about 4% compared to 1968. At the same time, personal taxes increased. Without this, government revenue would not have risen by 33 million over 1968.

This is only 2.5 percent of sales income

As the corporate tax burden decreases, personal income taxes increase. As farm income declines, prices soar. As unemployment rises labour is kept at a subsistence wage. Five-year tax holidays for foreign firms are still the order of the day by the Thatcher government.

With its total sales reaching over \$3,500 million then industry in Saskatchewan has been asked to pay only \$86.6 million in taxes.

The whole situation should be reversed.

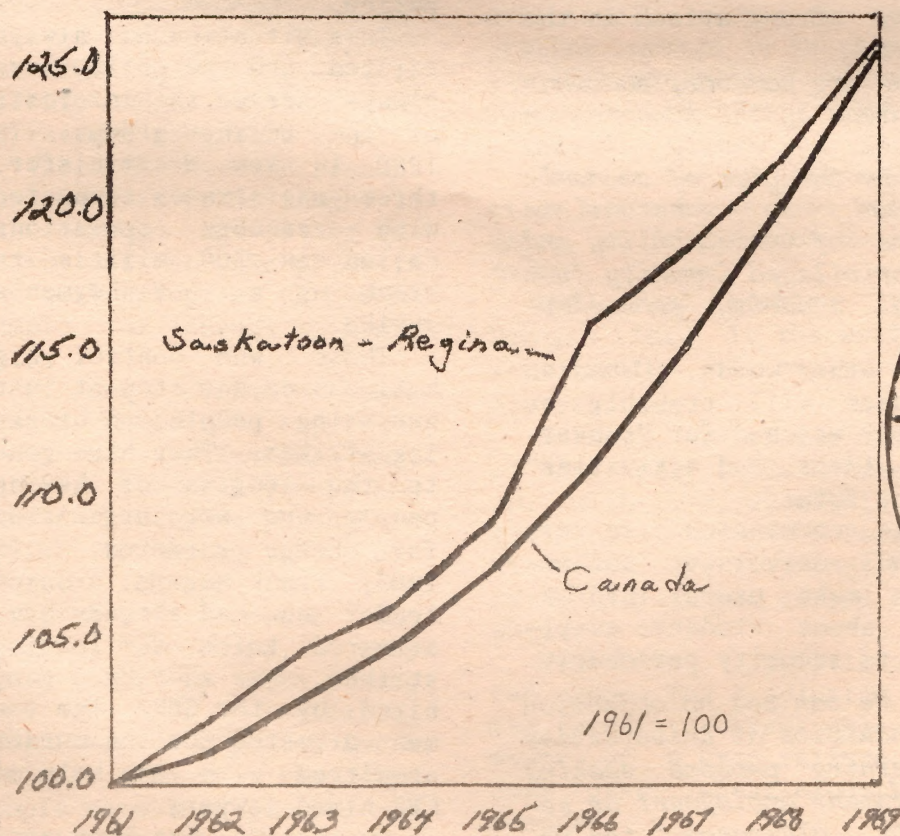
Taxing people more in this province is like beating a dead horse. The time has come to compel the large industries to pay their fair share of the province's costs and to place them under public price and profit controls.

For a start, we need a new tax structure along the lines of the Carter Commission Report, with built-in safe-guards against further price increases.

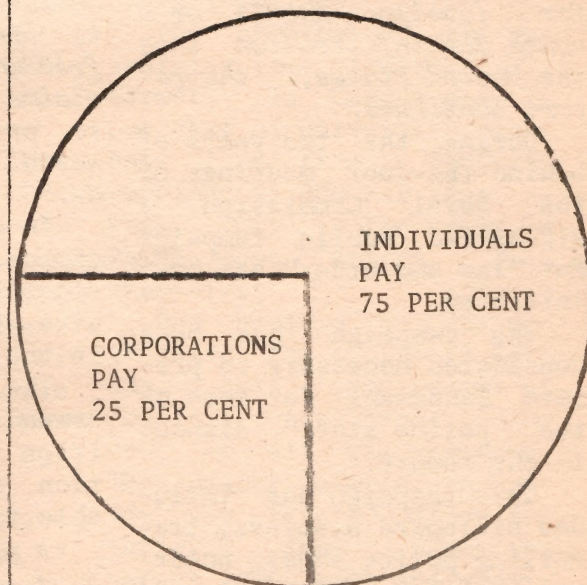
We have to get busy devising an agricultural program that will sell wheat. We must better advise and co-ordinate farm diversification for those who wish to diversify.

Before we can do any of these things, however, we need a new government-one that is responsible to people's needs rather than to profit for a handful of wealthy corporations.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX



Provincial Tax Revenues



The graph and the pie show Saskatchewan's economic situation. Private enterprises in the province take more and more money out of workers' pockets with price increases. Then the same businesses get away with paying only 25 per cent of the taxes.

GOVERNMENT

SECURITY

PLAN

In recent years many Canadians have watched with growing concern and alarm while a vast, tight-knit, police-security network has grown in the United States.

Most of us have taken pride and comfort in the belief that such a thing could not take place in Canada.

But the recently published Report of the Royal Commission on Security points to a very different truth. The ruling class in Canada is moving swiftly to set up just such a police network. It will include civilian organization, and the whole operation would be integrated with the American system.

The civilian agency would be designed explicitly for the surveillance and destruction of progressive social movements in this country.

The commission on Security was set up in 1966 by the Federal Government to investigate present security methods and to make recommendations for the improvement of Canada's security forces.

Many of the security measures recommended in the report are designed for integration with the American security forces, and for protection of the American war machine.

"The United States is the leader of the western alliance in terms of military, economic and political power," the report states.

"As a member of that alliance with special relationships in many fields and an open frontier with the United States, Canada has a serious responsibility to ensure that its territory is not used as a base for the mounting and direction of foreign espionage and subversive operations against the United States and that Canada is not a safe haven for foreign agents or a route for infiltration into the United States," the report continues.

During the two years of behind-the-door meetings of the Royal Commission, a widespread public campaign for "law and order" has been initiated.

The campaign has been considered necessary to prepare Canadians for some of the "police state" clauses in the report.

This campaign has included billboard displays, travelling police shows, numerous articles in local and national press and television, and extensive "respect your police" campaigns.

Many of the recommendations will lead, if adopted by the government, to dras-

tic restrictions on basic democratic freedoms.

The commission recommends a system of general black-listing of people not to be given government jobs.

The duties of the security service should be in part;

"To collect and evaluate information or intelligence concerning espionage and subversion, and to communicate such information in such a manner and to such persons as the head of the Service considers to be in the public interest."

The report also recommends the service be practically immune from public scrutiny.

"The head of the Security Agency should also have a certain degree of independence from the government," the report states.

Exactly how much "independence" is not made clear.

The report also seems very concerned with the growing struggle for national liberation by the people of French Canada. The commission recommends severe restrictions on them.

"We can see no objection to the Federal Government taking steps to prevent its infiltration by persons who are clearly committed to the dissolution of Canada and who are involved with elements of the separatist movement, in which seditious activity or foreign involvement are factors."

"We see no reason why the Federal Government should employ (especially in sensitive areas) persons who appear to be actively committed to an extreme separatist position."

University students and academics come under similarly strong attack in the report.

"We are however, somewhat disturbed by the tendency in certain university circles to use the plea of academic freedom to substantiate claims of inviolability and to privileged immunity from normal security procedures."

In other words, Canadian campuses will probably be closely watched for "subversive ideas and activities" in the future.

The commission also recommends university authorities make useful information about students available to security personnel.

"We can see no objection to inquiries at universities concerning persons seeking government employment or security clearance," the report states.

"We see no reason why any immunity should be accorded

to members of faculties or student bodies who engage in subversive activities."

The only significantly exploited group in society not mentioned directly in the report is Indians and Metis. But it is safe to assume they will not be considered "immune" from security investigations if their activities begin to threaten the status quo.

The report admits the new and expanded security operations will have to be carried on outside the law.

HISTORY

Canadian society teaches through its various institutions, (family, church, school, etc.,) that the police serve the people.

We have been taught to see policemen as basically no different from the average guy with a job to do and kids to support. But society has pointedly forgotten to mention what the basic function of the police is--the job that will always be done and done well.

Policemen are recruited from the working class, and then used to ensure that striking workers, minority groups and students never attain more than is conceded to them.

It is clear that if the monopoly corporations can manipulate political parties through contributions and hence can run governments they can quietly direct the activities of the police.

This situation has always existed, and the police have always served the interests of the ruling groups. In 1900 in New Westminster, three magistrates connected with cannery operations called in 200 militia to break up a fishermen's strike.

Those who control big business do not stop at just arresting people and breaking strikes. They have gone to the lengths of having people who were organizing for change murdered. In 1903, Frank Rogers, a union leader who had already been arrested twice for leading strikes, was shot by a gang hired by the CPR. The two men arrested for the murder acquitted with the help of CPR-hired lawyers.

Oppression has been systematic and well-organized in Canada's past. The draft has been used to get rid of

Because police are supposed to be guardians of law and order in our society, they couldn't conduct these kind of security investigations openly and still maintain their public support.

An obvious answer to this problem would be to set up an independent civilian operation similar to America's CIA.

The report suggests this type of plan.

"...it seems quite likely that many of the ob-

of PO

undesireables. Albert Goodwin, an early B.C. trade unionist, had his conscription classification changed to "active duty" from "un-



fit", after he had led a strike in Trail. Goodwin who had fled to the hills around Comox, was shot in the back by a Dominion police officer searching for draft evaders. The policeman, indicted for murder, was exonerated by an inquiry.

The breaking up of the Winnipeg general strike of 1919 illustrates not only the fine co-ordination of the oppressive forces, but their brutality as well.

The Immigration Act and Criminal Code were amended in one day for use against the strikers. Deportation of the non-Canadian born without any sort of hearing was legalized. The addition of Section 98 of the Criminal Code made it an offense to be a member of an unlawful association.

Union leaders were arrested and charged with seditious conspiracy, and most spent 6 months to 2 years in prison. The Royal Northwest Mounted Police, while officially "keeping order" at a workers' parade, charged at the crowd on

NS THREATEN OUR RIGHTS

jections to the investigations on university campuses have stemmed from the fact that these inquiries are conducted by policemen rather than from the fact of the investigation itself," the report states.

"...there is a clear distinction between the operational work of a security service and that of a police force.

"A security service inevitably is involved in activities that may contravene the spirit, if not the let-

ter of the law, and with clandestine and other activities which may sometimes seem to infringe on individuals rights," the report openly admits.

The Trudeau government has initially turned this suggestion down, saying that the RCMP must have time to assume these functions itself.

As a result, the RCMP has begun a heavy recruiting program on college campuses across the country to obtain staff for new and more

sophisticated security work.

This report has new and obvious implications for the Canadian people.

A security force such as the one suggested by the commission would play an oppressive role against workers, students and all other groups engaged in the struggle for real control of their lives.

This report foreshadows

many things. Some of the possibilities are:

- the growth of state repression against dissenting minorities,

- the increased strength of anti-progressive forces in the communities, and

- an even stronger attempt by the ruling class to maintain its profits and power in an exploitative social system.

LICE REPRESSION

horseback, firing directly into the crowd. One man was shot through the head and another through the chest.

Thousands of people went



on hunger marches during the depression. Arrests and harrassment were common. Relief-camp strikes and sit-ins were met with the same kind of response from provincial and federal governments.

In 1934 the unemployed on the west coast began an "On-to-Ottawa" trek for employment and a decent standard of living.

The now-famous "Regina Riot" was part of this story.

The "riot" was not really a riot at all but a concerted effort by those in power to stop the trekkers at all costs. This was done and then written into history as a "riot". The workers were condemned. The leaders were arrested and the dissent effectively smashed.

After the second world war police and state oppression took more subtle forms. Between 1946 and 1955 sixty-nine injunctions against strikers were applied for in B.C. alone. All but two were granted.

Repressive labor legislation has become more apparent in the recent past.

The passing of Bill Two, containing provisions to control the right of some areas of the work force to strike, has added to Saskatchewan's array of backward labor policies.

Throughout Canadian history the police and militia have been used against the native people.

The rebellion of 1885, led by Riel and Gabriel Dumont was put down by the Royal North-West Mounted Police (now the RCMP). They were aided by the Canadian Pacific Railway, which was then pushing its lines toward the west coast. The CPR is now one of Canada's largest corporations.

These are only a few of the many cases of police and state oppression, the times when the people have fought to better their lives.

These struggles for liberation are also the part of our history which rarely, if ever, gets printed in the history books. They are certainly not the lessons of history which we are taught to respect and learn from.

There are certain reasons why we are never taught in our schools and other institutions to take pride in the real struggles of common people for change in their lives.

If our children were taught to respect and learn from the experiences that workers, minority groups and others have gone through in trying to bring about effective change in our political, economic and social structure, they would grow up with strong feelings of solidarity dedicated to fighting for a society that respected people more than profits and private property. And big business and the few who try to control us know what that means -- their end.

farmers

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

facturers. Other benefits will go to the banks and finance companies, for the collective debt which Canadian farmers owe had reached \$3.9 billion by 1967.

How is the small Saskatchewan hog producer to compete with National Grain's 24,000 capacity hog plant in Abbotsford, B.C. ?

Feed grains have been removed from the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board at the agitation of agribusiness. Feed manufacturers are diversifying into livestock production, driving both grain farmers and livestock producers out of business.

Diversification is a real answer for a very few farmers. It does not deal with the fact that all farm prices are depressed. Any serious diversification moves only depress the food and fibre market in general.

Certainly every attempt should be made by farmers to increase their efficiency, to organize their production on a collective basis. But the only ways to do this effectively within the capitalist system is to organize like monopolies -- create monopoly control and rigging prices.

This is the required practice but most farmers would agree it is far from desirable.

The real problem the farmers face is the worldwide system of capitalist distribution.

Farmers are on the verge of bankruptcy in Saskatchewan, with record amounts of grain in storage. People elsewhere are starving, because they cannot afford our wheat.

Meanwhile, politicians can hope for a solution to the farmers problems only by means of a crop failure in some other wheat-exporting country.

Farmers are likely to hear little on these questions at Farm and Home Week.

There will be no discussion of agri-businesses and certainly no references to how the university serves them at the expense of working farmers.

There will be little discussion of how the farmer may gain control of what he produces, how he produces it and the return he gets for his work.

This is no coincidence, for the university really exists to serve the interests of the corporations. Only one farmer sits on the Board of Governors of the University. He is relatively wealthy, and he is a Liberal, the party which is most tied to agri-business.

Agricultural economics in the university does not deal with the corporate takeovers of agriculture. Rather the emphasis is on "farm efficiency" and an application of orthodox supply and demand theory to the problems of agriculture.

Research, usually ends up doing little more than providing profit opportunities for corporations devoted to the exploitation of farmers. It accelerates the concentration of farm capital and increases farm debt.

From 1962 to 1966 only 18.6 per cent of the graduates of the College of Agriculture returned to farming. Most become employed in agri-business.

The problem of the university is a problem of all farmers. In Canada only 25 per cent of university students come from families earning \$7,000 per year or less. This is the class in which most farmers find themselves.

But because of the regressive tax system in Canada, this same class of people provides about 53 per cent of all tax revenues. The poorer classes in Canada pay for education for the rich. That education serves the rich and undermines the position of the poorer classes.

Farmers and students must work together to make the university serve all working people.

SECRETARIES ARE PEOPLE TOO

By SALLY MAHOOD
and MAIJA CRANE

(The authors are members of the Regina Women's Liberation Group.)

An often ignored group of people in the university community is its employees. They are denied a role in the decision-making process and the questions that concern them are rarely raised.

Their only representation is through their union. Limited as this representation is, it is considerably more than that enjoyed by their counterparts in other universities.

The University of Saskatchewan is the only university in the country whose employees have organized themselves into one union.

The union includes caretakers, maintenance, clerical and food service staff.

Some of the food service staff were paid only minimum wages until the union won the right to act as their bargaining agent.

Previously, their wages rose only three to four per cent per year. Through the efforts of the union, wages have increased 25 percent over the last few years. However, lower paid classifications are still below the poverty level.

The last contract included provision for maternity leave. These benefits which university employees enjoy are not attributable to any great concern on the part of the university administration for its employ-

ees. The union struggled hard for these gains.

Over the last four years the union has negotiated two contracts, each taking ten months at the bargaining table. By the time one contract has been agreed upon it isn't long before the union faces another ten-month battle.

Over half the university employees are women, and most of these women are secretaries. Secretarial work is the traditional catch-all for women who work, both before marriage and after.

Secretaries perform many duties which far exceed any job description, including their own.

As one secretary said, "Your duties depend on the day-to-day whims of your

boss, from carrying coffee to arranging meetings, to occasionally being chased around the desk."

Secretaries have to contend not only with the boss but with students who arrogantly regard them as part of the office furniture.

The bureaucracy in the university is such that only the secretaries keep the institution functioning. They must make it their business to know who and what department is responsible for each individual problem that arises.

"If it weren't for the clerical grapevine, everyone would be lost," one secretary remarked.

On entering the university, students are at such a loss that it is often only the secretaries who can sort things out. Despite the fact that counselling is considered too "academic" a job for mere secretaries, they end up doing a great deal of informal counselling without credit or pay.

During the hectic rush of registration, secretaries sometimes miss coffee breaks or work overtime without compensation. The boss asks it as a favour, and the secretary knows wage increases are at the discretion of the boss. Therefore she finds it difficult to refuse.

All the employees face similar problems, but the secretaries face certain problems peculiar to themselves as women. Unless you are particularly skilled, it is to your advantage to be young, pretty, and to wear a mini-skirt.

A secretary is expected to project the image of her employer. This creates pressure from above and from the secretaries themselves, to spend much of their hard-earned salaries on their appearance.

As one university employee put it, "The snobbery of the academic community is reflected in the attitudes of the secretaries. They regard themselves as somewhat better than the secretaries who work downtown."

"Instead of identifying with other women in similar positions, the university secretaries identify with their employers. They're encouraged to do so."

This is unfortunate. If secretaries began to recognize their own interests as employees, they'd see that together they hold the power to greatly improve their own working conditions. They could bring about real changes in the institutions in which they are an integral, though often ignored part.

• Workers World •

(The writer is employed in a local beverage room; for obvious reasons, he will remain anonymous.)

I've been working in the Hotel for about two years now, and I suppose it isn't too bad here as far as bars go, but it would certainly be nice to be able to have a job where one is treated like a human being and not an object.

The customers treat me pretty good, but it sure bugs me when I have to cut a guy off and then the boss says to serve him anyway.

That happens quite a bit when the person is staying in the hotel. He complains to the night auditor, sales manager, head desk clerk, or directly to the bar manager, regardless of the reason for cutting him off, I have to serve him again anyway because the hotel doesn't want to offend their "good" customers.

Of course, it's completely opposite if the customer has long hair.

We've had instructions from up top to hassle these types so they will take their business elsewhere. We have to check their I.D. continually, and if the slightest problem arises, they are barred from the hotel. They are, of course, cut off on the slightest pretext.

It's a lousy situation actually. Most of them are pretty good people, long hair or not, and I have a lot less trouble with them than with the so-called business gentlemen who make complete idiots of themselves after a couple of beer.

The management has a real good racket going here, too.

It isn't unusual when things get busy to make a mistake when you're punching the till, and as a result at the end of the evening, the till will be out, even though the cash is correct.

And so, out comes the shortage from our own pockets.

When a guy has a family and only makes sixty some dollars a week, that makes things pretty tough. When the till is over, however, that's a different story. I don't have to tell you who gets that money.

Of course, the worst part of the job has to be the few customers who come in, get coked and have to take out their frustrations and bitchiness on the staff.

They throw beer around, swear at you and sometimes try to start fights. They'd never do that anywhere else, but in a bar, they seem to think waiters and waitresses are something less than human, that they are incapable of feelings and haven't got the same problems and worries as other people.

It's easy to say "get another job", but the way things are going, where are you going to get one? You can always tell how tight the job situation is by the number of people sitting in the bar in the afternoons; and things have been pretty busy the past while.

And of course there is a lot of back-stabbing around here, too. The staff really doesn't get along too well with each other, and they are always toadying up to the boss for pats on the back, etc. But then I sup-

pose you really can't blame them, what with the lousy wages, the customers and everything else.

I suppose currying favour and a pat on the back makes things just a little easier for them.

The girls are really bad for this. Being female, I guess, it's easier for them to snuggle up to the boss than it is for me, but I suppose you can't blame them. They have worse problems with the customers than I do; at least, I don't have guys running their hands over me!

But then, it's the same old story. A guy gets loose with his hands and out he goes.

However, if it's one of the "better" customers, we have to continue serving him. These guys would never act like that in a supermarket or department store, so why do it here? And they don't have to be drunk to do it either.

One last thing I'd like to mention. I noticed a few months ago in the PRAIRIE FIRE about the girls in the Hy Tiki at the Regina Inn having to find their way home after midnight. Well, it's the same thing here.

Now, there is supposed to be a provincial law against this, and I know the same things are going on in other bars, so why isn't something being done about it? The way things have been going in this town lately, what with all the robberies and assaults, someone's going to get killed.

Can't something be done to make the people who employ women after midnight obey the law?

PLAIN RAPPER CONDEMNS POLICE

by BARB CAMERON

The Regina Community Media Project, publishers of the PRAIRIE FIRE, put a new publication on the streets last week.

The PLAIN RAPPER, a four page handout, has been distributed in the University and high schools and in shopping centers and drive-ins around the city.

The first issue of the paper, which will be published occasionally, dealt with law and order, and police harassment of young people in Regina.

It also carried an article about the recent death of Chicago Black Panther Fred Hampton.

Hampton was murdered in Chicago shortly after he and two other Panthers visited Regina and spoke to students and working and native people.

An outline of citizens' legal rights when questioned by police was included in the handout.

The PLAIN RAPPER focused primarily on police harassment of young people.

the unemployed and native people in Regina.

Future issues of The PLAIN RAPPER will deal with the position of women in our society and with the need for community facilities for young people in Regina.

It condemned the police shooting of a Regina youth, Nick Mjasyk, as an "unnecessary and unjustified" killing.

"The immediate response to the shooting was a demonstration of about 100 people in front of the police station", the article on Nick states.

"We were angry and we showed that anger with our signs and our shouts. Several hundred copies of a leaflet written that day were distributed to passers-by."

The leaflet described how the shooting occurred and denounced the beating of Carl Harris by Regina Police. It criticized Police Chief Cookson's recent attempt to

in Regina protesting Nick's death tried to petition City Council, condemning the action. But Council supported a move by Aldermen Bothwell and Sherman not to hear the petition.

After the refusal, another pamphlet was prepared. It stated: "Young people are often urged to use proper channels when seeking to express grievances. In this case we were refused a hearing without good reason."

"We therefore have no choice but to take direct action to let City Council and the people of Regina know of our concern."

The PLAIN RAPPER repeatedly states its authors' concern that growing police brutality and harassment both in Regina, and in other places by those in power in our society, is used to protect and maintain the status quo.

The call for "law and order" reflects the fact that things are not running smoothly. Police are

in the area."

The Committee has been set up as a unit of the Employers' Association. It will carry on "education" in schools to get people to support the police. It will also set up a Citizens' Radio Watch under the Optimist Club.

Civilians with two way radios in their cars will be asked to "report suspicious activities" to a central radio receiver. These tips will be phoned to the police.

Other liaison work with the police will be carried on by a professional security agent, Doug McWilliams.

Much of the guidance for the committee has come from Police Chief Cookson, who has been associated with the group from its beginning. Cookson is largely responsible for the Committee's assertion that 75 per cent of breaking and entering jobs and armed robberies in Regina are committed by young people who need the same kind of



Many deserters come to Regina because the immigration officials here treat them more fairly than in other Canadian cities. Regina is good for getting landed immigrant status, but as a place to settle down in and look toward the future a lot is lacking.

After getting landed a deserter starts looking for a job, and is willing to accept almost anything in order to be self-supporting. Two or three weeks later he is sitting at home frustrated and depressed. There are no jobs available in Regina. He finds out that in Regina and the province of Saskatchewan itself the job situation is one of high unemployment. His only alternatives are either to stay in Regina and live off the charity of others (which he

doesn't desire) or to move on elsewhere, which doesn't offer very much in the way of security.

At the present time there are nine deserters in Regina and of the nine, four are landed. These four have been unable so far to find employment. A major problem deserters have in finding jobs is that many of the local industries are owned and controlled by U.S. corporations, which makes them prejudiced against hiring deserters. Sometimes the reasons for not being hired sound ridiculous, such as being over-qualified for a job by having two or more years of college. Reasons such as this, along with the employment situation in Saskatchewan makes it difficult for deserters to be self-supporting members of the Regina community.

threatening the property of the community and other big retailers are nothing but rich and powerful parasites.

"They make huge profits by taking money out of working people's pockets - their employees, food producers and consumers."

"Both Fred Hampton and Nick Mjasak were killed by armed agents of the ruling class. That class regards its property and its power as more important than human needs and human life."

The publication of The PLAIN RAPPER coincided almost exactly with a paid advertisement in the Regina Leader-Post. The advertisement was paid for by the "Responsible Citizens Committee," a group seeking to control crime in Regina.

The PLAIN RAPPER carried a section of this advertisement on its back page, along with similar statements made by Adolph Hitler in 1932.

The PRAIRIE FIRE has learned that the Responsible Citizens Committee had its beginning a year ago. At that time, according to Committee spokesman Ralph J. Purdy, the Chamber of Commerce and the Regina Employers' Association got together to "get an overall picture of the increasing crime rate and hoodlum activities

the "crime" of being young and organizing people to change the society. The RCC has not said who these people are. Nor has it responded to their claim that the police can be used to oppress people.

The RCC has close working relations with the Kiwanis Club, the Saskatchewan Pharmaceutical Association, and the Saskatchewan Alcohol Commission.

Oldies:

BACK ISSUES OF THE PRAIRIE FIRE ARE AVAILABLE. FOR A SAMPLE SELECTION OF FIVE COPIES:

SEND 50 CENTS TO THE PRAIRIE FIRE AT:

RM. 210,
NORTHERN CROWN
BLDG.,
REGINA.

we've moved

The PRAIRIE FIRE has moved its offices. Our NEW LOCATION is 1821 Scarth St. (NORTHERN CROWN BLDG.) Room 210.523-1076

Calendar of Events

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13

Dr. Leopold Kohr will give a lecture entitled "The Anguillan Affair", 8:00 P.M. at the Central Library Story Room.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14

There will be a talk on "The Effects of Pollution on the Total Ecology", 8:00P.M. at the Central Library Story Room.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16

Saskatchewan New Democratic Youth will be showing one of the best documentaries on the Vietnam war, "Year of the Pig"; 8:00 P.M. Place to be announced.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17

A program of music for cello and piano in the Central Library Story Room at 8:30 P.M.

JANUARY 11 to FEBRUARY 4

An exhibition of paintings by British Columbian artist Jack Wise at the Public Library Art Gallery.

Watch for the RCMP Ball and St. Valentine's Day Masacree coming February 13.

LETTERS

To the Editor:

In your issue No. 9, December 2, 1969, you published a very interesting article, "U.S. Controls Regina Art Shows".

While I cannot subscribe to Mrs. Kelly's view, it is encouraging to note that she considers the Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery and its activities worth criticizing. While we would prefer compliments, we accept criticism willingly. It is definitely preferable to silence, as it at least indicates that we are having an impact.

In view of Mrs. Kelly's comments, I thought the following information might be of interest to your readers. Since the autumn of 1966, the Gallery has had five American exhibitions, six exhibitions of Saskatchewan artists, four general Canadian exhibitions, three European Old Master exhibitions as well as a selection of smaller exhibitions of prints, drawings and design containing chiefly works by Canadian and European artists.

In the area of acquisitions, we have purchased six American works, 27 Canadian works -- predominantly Saskatchewan artists -- and 13 European works, the majority of which are prints and drawings.

Nancy E. Dillow
Director
Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery

AN OPEN LETTER
TO THE REGINA SEPARATE
SCHOOL BOARD AND HIGH SCHOOL
PRINCIPALS

There has been a lot of talk about letting students decide how they want to wear their hair and how they want to dress at school.

The public school system listened, while you, on the other hand, do nothing. You throw out the reason that we must be "prepared" for "work in the world of experience," the business world.

This is ridiculous, since first of all, not everybody wants to be in the business world, and, secondly, if one has to become part of it, it doesn't take much time to get a haircut.

The other main reason you give is that you have a responsibility to keep us "moral" or something. What has long hair got to do with morality?

It seems to me that the basic reason behind the separate school system, that of having religious instruction, has often been overstepped. This system wants religious superiority and alienation.

The initial purpose in having a separate school system was that catholic children were to be able to receive religious instruction. The schools have added to this the idea that everyone must be "clean cut." This leads some individuals to believe they are more important than others and others to believe they are different or inferior.

This is what separates people from each other and alienates many from the community and the school.

The administrations of the separate schools have no justification in denying a man's God-given right to look like he wants to. It is ridiculous to see the number of kids who have dropped out of school and are walking the streets because

a) they want to look the way they feel,

b) they are forced to make a decision between school and a way of life before they should have to.

--Mark Keller
Grade 10
Miller High

Prairie Fire

An Independent
Community Newsweekly

needs support.

The only way that
we know we've got

your support
is if
you

SUBSCRIBE

MAIL TO: THE REGINA COMMUNITY MEDIA PROJECT
210 NORTHERN CROWN BUILDING
REGINA, SASK.

SEND ME:

___ 4 months, 16 issues, \$3.00 ___ 1 year, 52 issues, \$8.00

___ an honorary, \$50.00

Payment enclosed ___

Bill me ___

NAME: ___

ADDRESS: ___

